



Town of Erie

Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan Overview

Intent

The intent of The Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan is to identify specific components within the Plan Influence Area and suggest possible future physical improvements as well as planning and redevelopment strategies that will guide and inform redevelopment opportunities and future public improvements. The Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan in tandem with the Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Code will:

- Help manage town assets in a thoughtful sustainable manner
- Contribute to a healthy, vibrant, welcoming, and economically strong Downtown.
- Create and promote the Historic Downtown core as “The Place” to gather, live, work, and play experiencing the very pedestrian scale town that once was typical of small rural towns in the west.

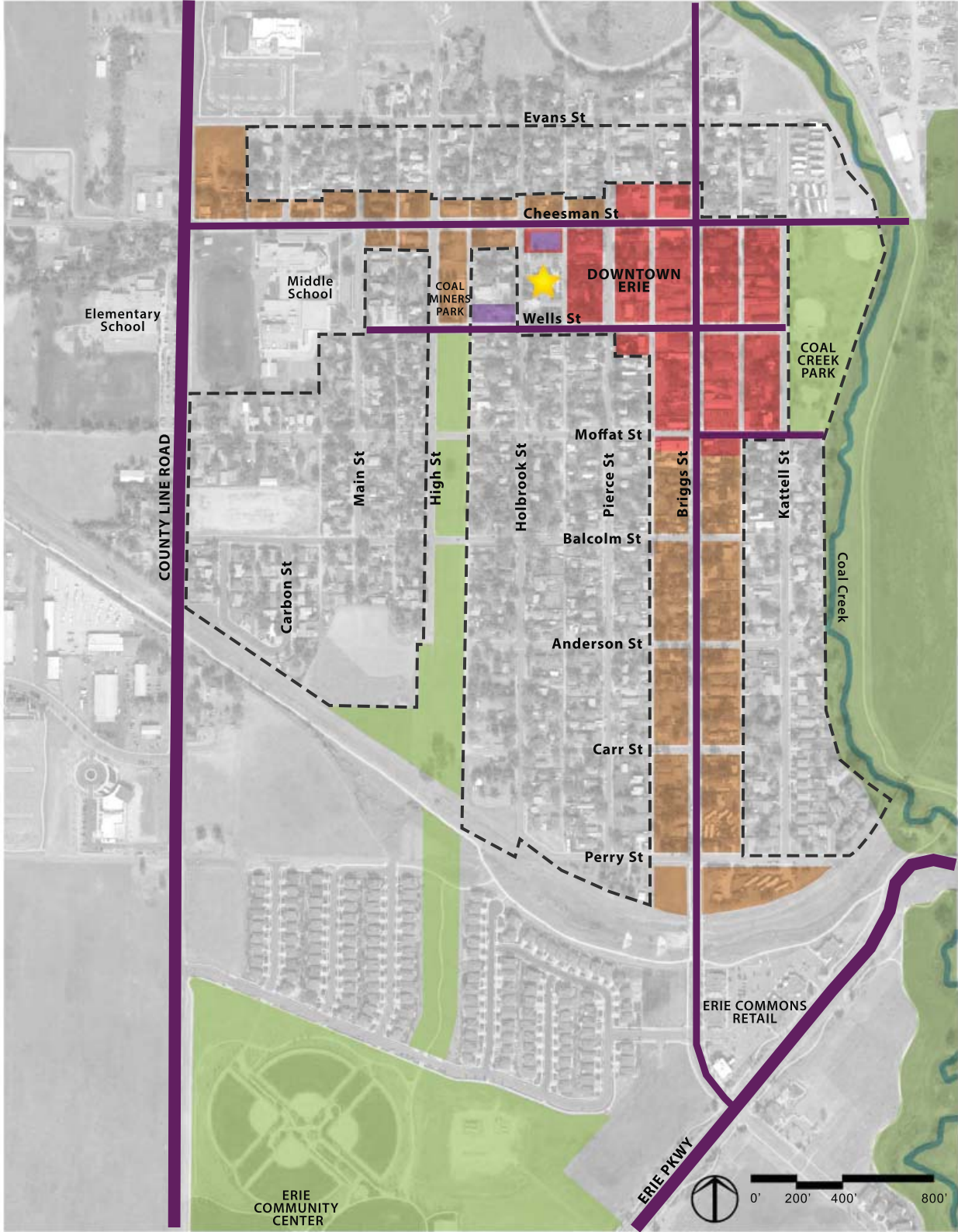
Focus








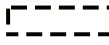
The Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan focuses on the Downtown (DT) District and the Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMU – Old Town) District while recognizing the importance of the relationship to the major elements of the park program in the Coal Creek Park Conceptual Design document.

The Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan includes several major elements that frames the overall vision of the plan:

- Vehicular gateways are explored to provide guidance for improvements on sign identification and improvements, along with a new street access to the Downtown from Colliers Hill.
- Creation of a new circulator trail is proposed to provide non-vehicular access through the Downtown District from the Coal Creek trail to the Erie Community Center. The Town would like to encourage alternate forms of transportation and ease parking challenges during seasonal events. Trail improvements explored include:
 - A new pedestrian/bike bridge into Coal Creek Park from the Coal Creek trail corridor.
 - A dedicated on-street bike lane on Wells Street from Coal Creek Park to Erie Middle School. Implementation of the on-street bike lane will require a one-way configuration of Wells Street.
 - A dedicated off street pedestrian/bike trail on Town owned property adjacent to High Street.
- Evaluation of existing parking and strategies to improve parking availability for on-street parking and off-street parking lots.
- Recommendations for streetscape improvements to create a consistent identity in the Downtown and Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts.
- Relay a Town vision for redevelopment proposals on property within the Downtown and Neighborhood Mixed Use Districts.

Plan Influence Area



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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Major corridors into Downtown |  Downtown District (DT) |
|  Gateway corridors into Downtown |  Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU) |
|  New Parking Lots |  Parks, Open Space, Town Property |
|  Town Hall |  Old Town Residential (OTR) |

Downtown District (DT)

Purpose

To provide for and encourage development and redevelopment that preserves and enhances the unique character and vitality of Old Town Erie. Small-scale offices, retail, and residential uses are permitted. New development is encouraged to place residential above the ground floor. Design standards focus on creating a human-scaled, pedestrian-oriented and walkable downtown that invites commercial development and complementary residential opportunities. Continuous retail frontages, largely uninterrupted by driveways and parking, are encouraged.

-Town of Erie Unified Development Code- August 2015, Chapter 2: Zone Districts

Downtown (DT) and Neighborhood Mixed-Use (NMU – Old Town) Districts

Purpose

These standards are intended to provide guidance for all mixed-use, commercial and public/institutional infill and redevelopment within the DT and NMU (Old Town) and to ensure that new development respects the small-town scale and historic context of the area. The standards will assist investors in making design choices that will have a positive impact on both the historic and future character of the DT and NMU (Old Town).

Development in the DT and NMU (Old Town) should respect the historic character and reinforce the image of the DT and NMU (Old Town) as an attractive, pedestrian-oriented district.

-Town of Erie Unified Development Code- August 2015 Chapter 4: Dimensional Standards

The intersections of Cheesman/ County Line Road and Briggs Street/Erie Parkway serve as the two primary gateways to Old Town. Development in these locations should be designed to emphasize the gateway through reduced building setbacks, increased building heights at the corner, additional landscaping, and / or the use of other design features.
-Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan – 2015 Update Chapter 13: Community Character and Design

Introduction

The location of Historic Downtown Erie requires special attention to vehicular connectivity and wayfinding. The appropriate identification of vehicular Gateways and corridors not only improve way finding and connectivity but are also the first opportunity to define and reinforce the desired identity of Historic Downtown Erie. While most visitors to the Town probably use the South Gateway, other existing and proposed Gateways are identified and will need to be addressed as development patterns in the area evolve and redevelopment opportunities come forwards in Downtown Erie.

West Gateway

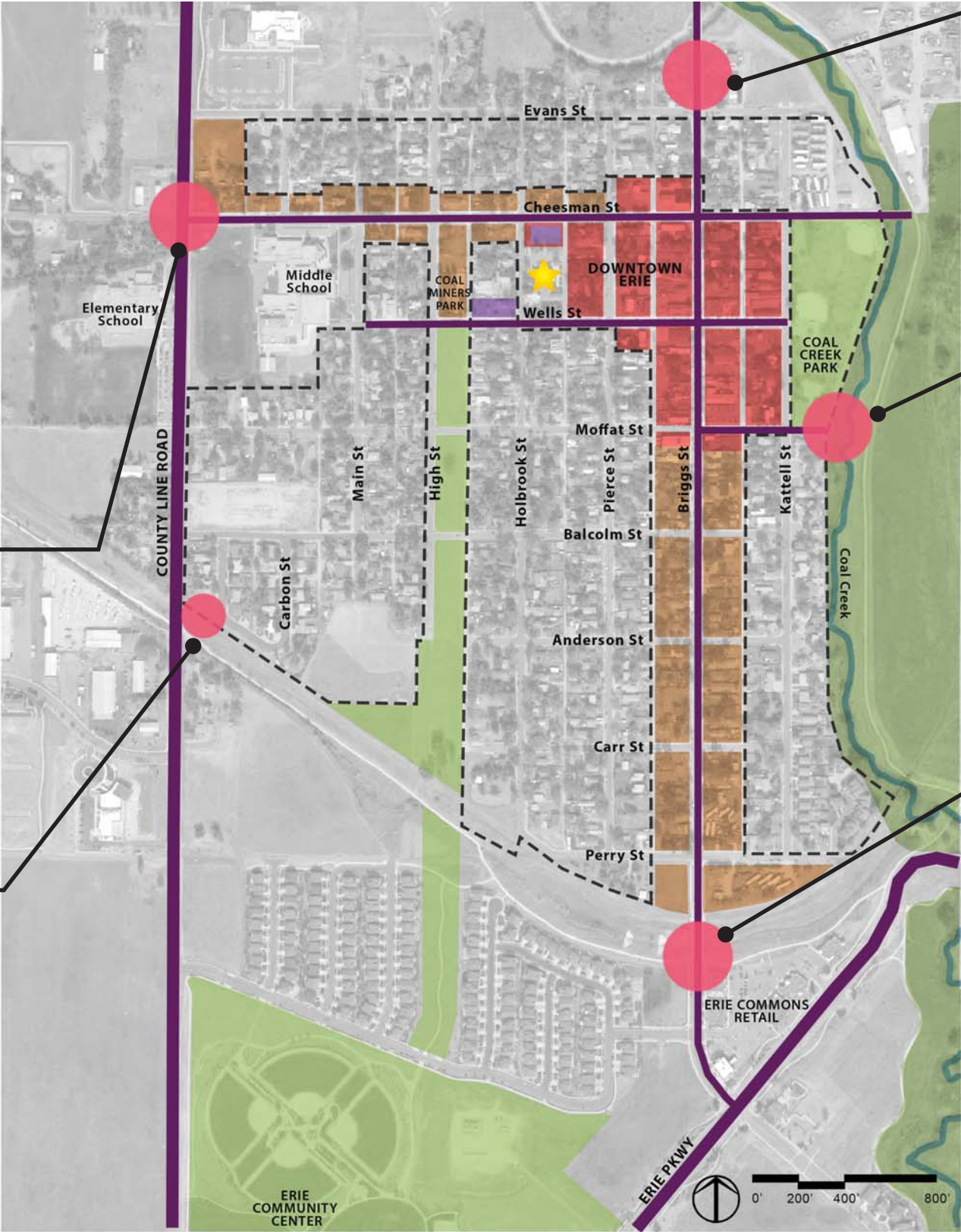
Although the Town recognizes Cheesman St. as an important vehicular conduit into historic Downtown Erie , it is also recognized that current roadway and landuse conditions at Cheesman St. and County Line Rd. are not favorable for the creation of a Gateway similar to the South Gateway. Future improvements to County Line Road, including widening and the possible addition of medians, will change circulation patterns at this intersection as well. A Town-wide Wayfinding program could address directional and identification signage in this area.

Southwest Identification & Wayfinding

The Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan identifies County Line Rd. as one of several Gateway Corridors key to the Town of Erie. It is important to provide vehicular related wayfinding signage at some distance prior to entry points into Downtown.

An opportunity exists to accommodate a vehicular wayfinding element along County Line Rd. The Town owns a small parcel of land exists just north of the railroad right of way on the east side of County Line Rd. that could accomodate a monument sign and improved landscaping.

Vehicular Gateways



North Gateway

The North Gateway is currently not a primary gateway. However, directional and identification signage should be provided.

The North Gateway should, however, provide a continuous and safe pedestrian access into Downtown.

East Gateway

Moffat St. is proposed to be extended East across Coal Creek to service the Colliers Hill development. This new infrastructure will become another gateway into Downtown and will place visitors right into the core of Old Town Erie.

This new extension will impact vehicular circulation and parking throughout the Downtown Core. For this reason the East Gateway is addressed in the Downtown Core section.

South Gateway

The existing Gateway intersection at Erie Parkway and South Briggs St. incorporates many of the design elements that begin to contribute to the creation of town identity and inform connectivity. The existing commercial development on the north east corner incorporates appropriate architecture. Future development on the west side of south Briggs St. should be of a similar style and massing. Replication of the Town of Erie Monument located at this intersection should be promoted as it has set an example of a successful identifying marker.

The existing bridge along Briggs St., with its brick columns and walls creates a gateway that one passes over on their way to Downtown Erie. This arrival experience should be enhanced. The implementation of street lights and an overhead archway could accomplish this and provide a location for a permanent Historic Town of Erie sign and or seasonal banners.

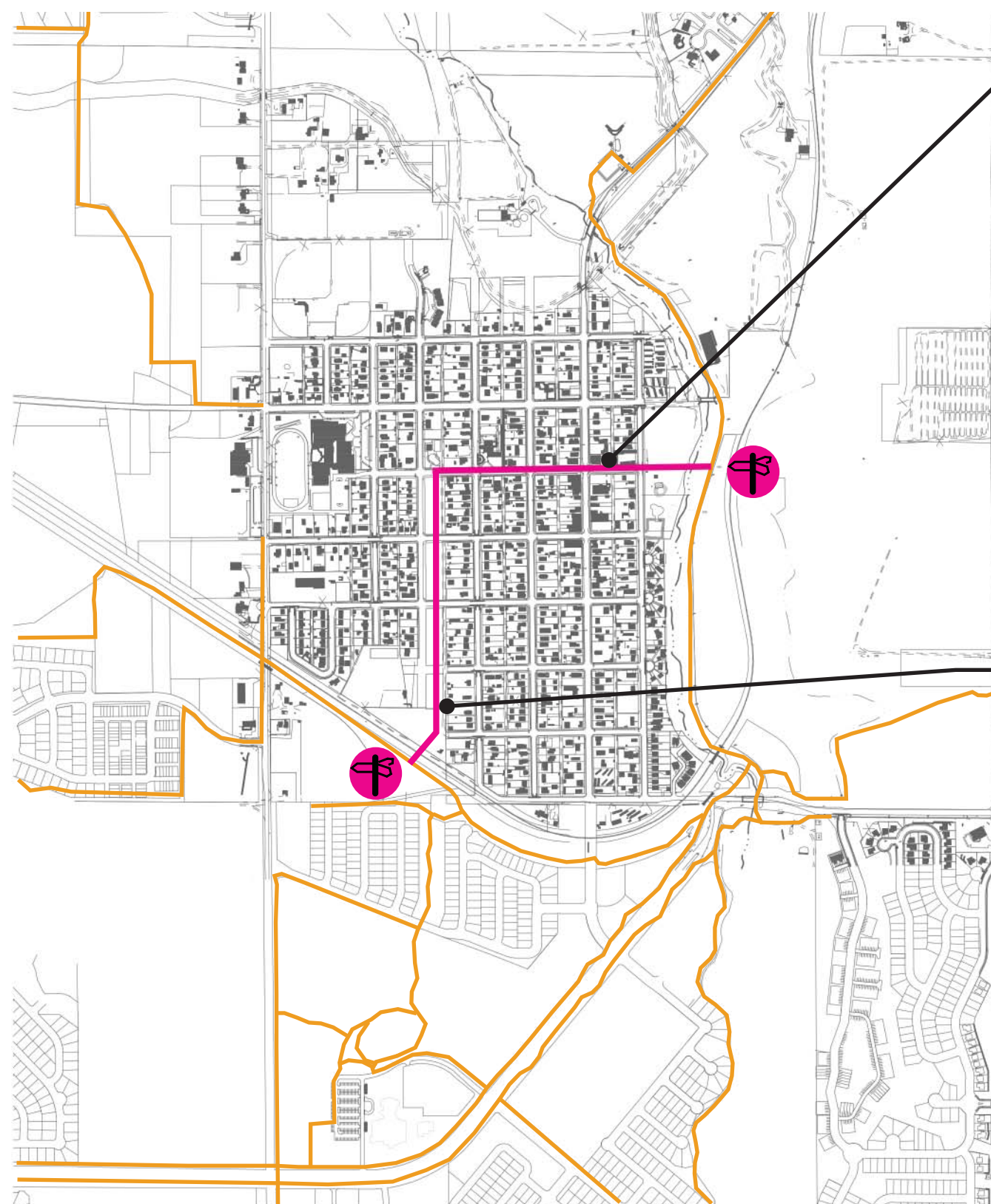
Once over the bridge, Town identity currently becomes diluted until you reach Moffat St. This Gap in identity and continuity is addressed within the south Briggs St. streetscape section.

Provide a community-wide primary trail system that connects major destinations and provides opportunities for trail loops with areas of interest along the route
-Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan – 2015 Update Chapter 7: Parks, Recreation and Trails

Introduction

The Downtown is surrounded by a comprehensive network of pedestrian trails that afford a great opportunity to draw pedestrians and cyclists into and through the Downtown core. During fair weather seasons, when many special events occur in the Downtown, it would be beneficial to provide an easily accessible trail system through Downtown as an alternative mode of transportation to events.

This Plan recommends that the pedestrian connection from the spine trail along Coal Creek come through Coal Creek Park and west along Wells Street. Details regarding the option to transform Wells Street into a trail corridor that would contain pedestrian friendly sidewalks, a dedicated on-street bike lane, and a one lane, one way vehicular travel lane is explored in further detail in another section of the Plan. The Wells Street trail corridor could then connect to an off-street trail that parallels High Street, on property that the Town owns, that runs all the way south to the spine trail south of the railroad corridor. The connection to this southern trail would create a loop trail through the Downtown, providing easy access to the Downtown from both spine trails.



Coal Creek Trail Connection

The Coal Creek Trail connection will encourage pedestrian and bicycle access to the heart of Downtown Erie. While a physical connection is easy to accomplish and will address the goal, trail connectivity into and around the influence area of the Downtown Redevelopment Framework Plan takes on a broader context.

The creation of way finding elements and the purposeful location of those elements is key to help direct trail users to Downtown Erie. This involves not only directional and distance way finding messages , but should also include the ability to promote the very popular seasonal community events, and smaller events that local businesses might be sponsoring. It is important to reach the growing population of trail users to make them aware of what is happening in Downtown Erie.

Bike parking areas are an important component to the local biking community. Bike parking is discussed in the Downtown Core Section.

South Trail Corridor

The South Trail Corridor is a unique feature in the Town of Erie. If this asset is treated appropriately it could become part of the Town's identity that is unique to Erie. It's size, location and shape contribute to pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, not only within the Old Town areas, but reaching out to other Town amenities, as well as local and regional trail systems.

The Town's property at the South end of the South Trails Corridor expands to the west. This additional area, as well as the stand of existing trees and the views west to the Front Range, make this an asthetically pleasing trail gateway. This gateway could be articulated with benches, shade shelter and informational signage promoting the Town and seasonal activities, as well as trail maps and distances. This is also an opportunity to include interpretive signage that may focus on the history of Erie and specifically the railroad.

This corridor would connect, on the North end, to the on-street bike lane proposed at Wells Street.

Legend

- Existing Trails
- Proposed Pedestrian and Bicycle Corridors
-  Proposed Wayfinding Elements

